

Report on the Symposium in FY 2016

Many Minds Many Hearts One Shikoku

“To Make the Shikoku Henro a World Heritage Site” International Symposium

- Date and Time: Saturday, March 18, 2017. 1:00~4:40 p.m.
Venue: Hotel Clement Tokushima
(61, Terashima Honcho Nishi 1 chome, Tokushima City, Tokushima Prefecture)
- Program:
- Report by the Agency for Cultural Affairs:
Recent Trends of the World Cultural Heritage Program
Ichita Shimoda (Senior Cultural Properties Specialist, Office for World Cultural Heritage, Monument and Sites Division, Cultural Properties Department, Agency for Cultural Affairs)
 - Commemorative Lectures:
 - (1) Based on the Experience of Inscribing the Silk Roads on the World Heritage List
Guo Zhan (former Vice President of the International Council on Monuments and Sites [ICOMOS])
 - (2) The Shikoku Henro and the Kumano Kodo Pilgrimage Routes
Masahiko Hayashi (Professor Emeritus, Meiji University)
 - Panel Discussion: To Inscribe the Shikoku Henro on the World Heritage List
Facilitator: Shinichi Shimizu (Professor, Tokushima Bunri University)
Panelists: Guo Zhan (former Vice President of ICOMOS)
Makoto Motonaka (Counsellor, Cabinet Secretariat)
Masahiko Hayashi (Professor Emeritus, Meiji University)
Masaaki Oishi (Executive Director, Vice President, Naruto University of Education)
- Organizers: Organized by: The Shikoku Henro World Heritage Inscription Council
Council to Promote Partnership between the Shikoku Henro and Kumano Kodo Pilgrimage Routes
Cooperation given by: NPO Network for Shikoku Henro Pilgrimage and Hospitality

■ Outline

On Saturday, March 18, 2017, the Shikoku Henro World Heritage Inscription Council held an international symposium titled “To Make the Shikoku Henro a World Heritage Site” at Clement Hall, Hotel Clement Tokushima, with cooperation given by the Council to Promote Partnership between the Shikoku Henro and Kumano Kodo Pilgrimage Routes. About 200 people participated in the event.

At the symposium, a report was presented regarding initiatives taken by Shikoku over the past decade to nominate the property for Japan’s Tentative List of World Heritage Sites, along with the present situation of related activities. In addition, two commemorative lectures were given on the Silk Roads and the Kumano Kodo pilgrimage routes (Sacred Sites and Pilgrimage Routes in the Kii Mountain Range), which were registered as a World Heritage site 10 years before. By comparing these properties, both of which are related to roads, a panel discussion was held, involving a specialist from overseas, regarding features of the Shikoku henro, its tangible and intangible component parts, and various other issues.



■ Greetings by Related Parties



Chairman Akira Chiba of the Shikoku Henro World Heritage Inscription Council (Chairman of the Shikoku Economic Federation)

In his greeting, Chairman Akira Chiba of the council said: “Despite radical changes in the environment of the Shikoku henro from the Edo Period (1603-1868) and the diversification of pilgrimage styles, even today 150,000 people annually tour along the pilgrimage routes in Shikoku, a fact that attests to the eternal value of the Shikoku henro. It is the responsibility of us, residents in Shikoku, to preserve this valuable asset, promote global recognition of the property, and pass it on to future generations.”

In a video message, Governor Kamon Iizumi of Tokushima Prefecture announced that he furnished a written proposal to nominate the property for Japan’s Tentative List of World Heritage Sites to the Director of the Agency for Cultural Affairs on August 8, 2016. He then discussed the importance of fulfilling the following two tasks: presenting testimonies of the outstanding universal value and reinforcing protection measures of the property. He expressed his hope that the symposium would help advance the process toward the inscription of the property on Japan’s Tentative List and promote the culture of the Shikoku henro to the world.



Vice Chairman Kamon Iizumi of the Shikoku Henro World Heritage Inscription Council (Governor of Tokushima Prefecture)

■ Report: Recent Trends of the World Cultural Heritage Program

Mr. Ichita Shimoda, a Senior Cultural Properties Specialist of the Agency for Cultural Affairs, reported on recent trends of the World Heritage program as follows:

“This year, forty-five years after the adoption of the World Heritage Convention, the number of listed properties reached more than 1,000, but many heritage sites are not sufficiently protected. In this context, state parties are requested to voluntarily restrict nominating activities while the World Heritage Committee is limiting the number of properties to be examined.”

In the case of the Shikoku henro, he suggested that concerning its authenticity, which should be testified to in order to add the property on the World Heritage List, related parties should consider whether to select the specific period of the property when its value was the highest (when pilgrimage was most popular) or to include the earlier periods and to nominate the whole of the history of the property. Regarding the integrity, he said, “Even though it would be best to include all eighty-eight temples and the whole of the pilgrimage routes in the property to be nominated, related parties should review what percentage of the property could be theoretically explained to bear integrity.” He also mentioned, “Since UNESCO evaluates involvement of local communities, seeking understanding of and involving community members in the campaign would be essential particularly in the Shikoku henro project, which is characterized by the living tradition of local culture and practice of *o-settai* (offering support).”

When considering what properties should be added on Japan’s Tentative List, he said: “It is necessary to prepare a grand design that represents Japanese culture. From a historical viewpoint, for example, most candidate properties on the Tentative List are of the early modern period. It is therefore necessary to select properties that do not overlap other candidates from diverse perspectives, including chronological timeline.” He concluded: “It takes a long time before inscribing a property on the World Heritage List, and even after the registration of the property, there would be various challenges, as well as merits. Based on this recognition, I hope that you will consider the registration from a long-term view.”



Mr. Ichita Shimoda (Senior Cultural Properties Specialist, Office for World Cultural Heritage, the Agency for Cultural Affairs)

■ Commemorative Lectures: Based on the Experience of Inscribing Silk Roads on the World Heritage List

Mr. Guo Zhan, former Vice President of ICOMOS, gave a lecture on the challenges involved in the registration of the Shikoku henro based on his own experience in inscribing the Silk Roads on the World Heritage List.

He suggested as follows: “Since the concept of the ‘road of culture’ has gained international support, increasing numbers of countries jointly furnish applications to UNESCO. In the Silk Roads project, China, Kazakhstan, and the Kyrgyz Republic jointly worked. Taking the serial nomination approach by linking multiple sites, the three countries advocated that the value of the Silk Roads lay in the unification of various functions of the roads to promote trades of silk and other products, along with cultural interactions. To add a property on the World Heritage List, it is necessary to conduct comparative studies of similar properties to identify the specific or unique testimony of the nominated property in human history.” In this context, he suggested that the Shikoku project should also take the serial nomination approach, saying, “Please notice that 1 plus 1 becomes greater than 2 in the case of serial nomination.”

He further suggested that the Shikoku henro could exhibit its unique testimony different from that of the Silk Roads and other trade routes since it includes paths for ascetic religious training. Concerning a theme that is necessary to present, he said, “By combining various elements, including the local culture of o-settai, in addition to the temples and pilgrimage routes, the related parties could present a theme of profound meaning.” “Once the theme is established,” he added, “various aspects of the Shikoku henro would become clearly visible, such as roads and other traffic infrastructure and the influence of pilgrimage on local communities, development of roadside villages, and buildings.” In conclusion, he said, “Although inscription on the World Heritage List tends to vitalize tourism, the primary purpose of the inscription should be passing on the property to future generations.” In the end, he promised to support Shikoku with its efforts to register the property as a World Heritage site.



Mr. Guo Zhan, former Vice President of ICOMOS

The Shikoku Henro and the Kumano Kodo Pilgrimage Routes

Based on the research outcomes of the Kumano Kodo, Professor Emeritus Masahiko Hayashi of Meiji University lectured on common points and differences between the Shikoku henro and the Kumano Kodo as follows:

“After the inscription of the Kumano Kodo as a World Heritage site under the title ‘Sacred Sites and Pilgrimage Routes in the Kii Mountain Range,’ Meiji University organized academic meetings and forums on Kumano together with related governments to promote the property at various locations, particularly Tokyo, where residents have keen interest in the property. Based on this experience, I recognized the importance of involving people in various regions in addition to residents of a property’s site.

“Seigantoji Temple in Kumano, the first destination on the pilgrimage routes in Saigoku (Western Japan), appears in books written in the Muromachi period (1336–1573), such as *Jimon Koso-ki*, a Buddhist document that precisely describes pilgrimage to Kumano and Saigoku. During the Edo period (1603–1868), the pilgrimage to Kumano became popular, driven by the development of highways, improvement of a horseshoe technology, and spread of a bill dealing system. While the term ‘*henro*’ is used to refer to pilgrimage roads in Shikoku, the Kumano Kodo is called ‘*hechi*,’ the similarity in these two terms implying some relationship between the two regions. In fact, there were cases where pilgrims went to Shikoku after completing pilgrimage in Kumano and Saigoku. In several documents, including the *Shikoku Henro Nikki* (Shikoku pilgrimage diary) by a Buddhist priest Chozen, shrines in Kumano are mentioned in the passages concerning temples in Shikoku, including Shozanji Temple and Ishiteji Temple. These remarks imply that monks who had ascetic training in mountains in Kumano went to Shikoku. Concerning the origin of the Shikoku henro, there are several stories, including those associated with monks in Kumano, in addition to those of Emon Saburo and Kūkai (Kōbō Daishi). Whether it is true or not, the stories associated with monks in Kumano indicate significant influence of Kumano on the Shikoku henro.”

Finally, he introduced the practice of *etoki* (a Buddhist practice of using a painted hand scroll to explain Buddhist teachings) in the legend of Emon Saburo in Matsuyama City (Ehime Prefecture, Shikoku). Describing that the pilgrimage to Kumano was promoted by nuns from Kumano who used *etoki* to encourage people to go to Kumano, he said that pilgrimage in Kumano was promoted by religious organizations, particularly the three shrines in Kumano. On this point, he said, “There is a great difference between pilgrimage in Kumano and Shikoku, since the former was promoted by nuns in Kumano who traveled nationwide to encourage pilgrimage while the latter has been supported and promoted by local communities and residents.”



Professor Emeritus Masahiko Hayashi of Meiji University

■ Panel Discussion: To Inscribe the Shikoku Henro on the World Heritage List

After the lectures, reports were presented by Mr. Makoto Motonaka and Mr. Masaaki Oishi, which were followed by lively discussions.

Mr. Makoto Motonaka, a Counsellor of the Cabinet Secretariat, said: “The Shikoku henro is characterized by faith and devotion of common people

in and after the early modern period, as is evidenced in the practice of o-settai. This is a very important point, but it requires creative explanation.” He also suggested that a deciding factor for the inscription would be presenting evidence that meets Selection Criterion iii (to bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization which is living, or which has disappeared). At the same time, he suggested: “It is necessary to provide a solid explanation about the relationship between the Shikoku henro and Kōbō Daishi, distinguishing it from his relationship with Koyasan and other related places. Moreover, it would be necessary to study the property in consideration of the roles played by the temples and pilgrimage routes in developing Japanese people’s view of landscapes.” He added, “Rather than making the inscription on the World Heritage List the sole purpose of the project, related parties should place importance on its process. For example, they can seek to develop specialists through collaboration in the process.” Finally, he said, “Please engage in the project based on the recognition that efforts toward the inscription would require considerable time, manpower, and cost.”

Mr. Masaaki Oishi, Vice President of Naruto University of Education, introduced the history of the Shikoku henro as follows: “In early days, Buddhist monks toured the rural areas in Shikoku where Kūkai (Kōbō Daishi) engaged in ascetic training. During the Edo period (1603–1868), the routes taken by these monks developed into the Shikoku henro, pilgrimage routes of common lay people, linking eighty-eight temples. Local people’s support of pilgrims was then established as the practice of o-settai. Temples along the routes built Daishidō (a building with a statue of Kōbō Daishi). Along the roads connecting the temples, signposts were erected, as well as tombs for deceased pilgrims. In this way, landscapes of the Shikoku henro as they are today were created during the Edo period. Documents in the period indicate the presence of pilgrims who traveled in Shikoku in their last years and who died and were buried in roadside tombs. As part of the o-settai, local people erected their tombs. At the temples along the routes, pilgrims obtained amulets and collected red ink stamps in their stamp books. These items probably functioned as tools for pilgrims to confirm their faith.” In conclusion, he said, “An outstanding feature of the Shikoku henro lies in its double-layer structure, comprising pilgrimage of common lay people on the basis of ascetic training by monks.”

Mr. Masahiko Hayashi pointed out the following two characteristics of the Shikoku henro: first, it was a circular route, and second, the majority of pilgrims were common people, independent from religious organizations. In terms of the similarities of the Shikoku henro and Kumano pilgrimage routes, he suggested as follows: “Both had free hostels, some people went on pilgrimage more than once, and it was believed that the more frequently one went on pilgrimage, the greater merit one gained.” To study the history and characteristics of the Shikoku henro, he advocated that an academic society dedicated to research of the Shikoku henro should be formed in Shikoku since studies of the property from a long-term view would help the efforts to add the property on the World Heritage List.

Mr. Guo Zhan valued the Shikoku henro for its uniqueness. He said, “The property is unparalleled by any in the world in that it comprises of a circular route without a destination, has a long history, and was used for ascetic training.” To exhibit these characteristics, he suggested that the term “*henro*” should be included in the title of the property. To demonstrate the property’s authenticity, he suggested that the year when a temple was erected should be written accurately together with the years of their repairs and renovations. He encouraged related parties with the following message: “Although seeking the inscription on the World Heritage List will entail a tremendous effort and take a long time, the process will provide the local people with a good opportunity to reevaluate their hometowns. Through the campaign they can proudly promote attractive features of their hometowns to the world.”



Facilitator, Mr. Shinichi Shimizu



From left: Panelists, Guo Zhan, Masahiko Hayashi, Makoto Motonaka, and Masaaki Oishi (Titles omitted)

Finally, as the facilitator, Professor Shinichi Shimizu of Tokushima Bunri University said that the main features of the Shikoku henro are intangible elements, such as the practice of pilgrimage and o-settai, rather than magnificent structures. He said: “As it was suggested by Mr. Motonaka, intangible assets are important but difficult to protect by law. Accordingly, we should establish a sort of rule to protect diverse styles of pilgrimage. Regarding the period of the property to be nominated, it would be best to specify the period when the majority of pilgrims toured the routes on foot and when traces of ascetic training still remained.” In conclusion, he asked people in the Shikoku region for their support of the campaign, saying, “It is important to go back to the origin and determine which assets we should protect and pass on to future generations.”